

Language Assistance Plan for: City of Mankato
(Name of Transit System)

DATE adopted or approved by Transit System: November 08, 2010

Purpose

The purpose of this Language Assistance Implementation Plan (hereinafter "plan") is to meet Federal Transit Administration's (FTA's) requirements to comply with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, which prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, or national origin. As a subrecipient of FTA funds, this transit system is pledged to take reasonable steps to provide meaningful access to its transit services for persons who do not speak English as their primary language and who have a limited ability to read, speak, write, or understand English. The FTA refers to these persons as Limited English Proficient (LEP) persons.

The U.S. DOT's FTA Office of Civil Rights' publication "*Implementing the Department of Transportation's Policy Guidance Concerning Recipients' Responsibilities to Limited English Proficient Persons – A Handbook for Public Transportation Providers*" was used in the preparation of this plan.

Contents

This plan contains:

- A. A needs assessment based on the four-factor analysis
- B. Language assistance measures
- C. A staff training plan
- D. Methods for notifying LEP persons about available language assistance
- E. Methods for monitoring, evaluating and updating plan

A. LEP Needs Assessment – the Four-Factor Analysis

Factor 1. The number or proportion of LEP persons in our service area who may be served or are likely to encounter a transit program, activity, or service.

We assessed the following information (as checked) about LEP persons to determine the number or proportion of LEP persons who might use or want to use our transit services:

- ☒ GIS map showing transit service area and concentrations of LEP persons (Attachment A)
- ☒ 2000 US Census data
- ☒ Survey results
- ☒ Reports from drivers, dispatchers, others about contact with LEP persons
- ☒ Local school district data
- ☐ Human Services Dept. data
- ☐ Information from local organizations (religious, legal, social service, etc.) about LEP persons in our service area
- ☐ Other information. Describe: _____

According to data provided by Mn/DOT from the 2000 US Census:

- The total number of LEP persons in our service area is 910.
- The total eligible population in our service area is 47,689.
- The proportion of LEP persons to the total eligible service population is 2%.

The only time that our drivers are aware of coming into contact with persons of limited English proficiency is when they either pick up or drop off individuals at the Lincoln Community Center and occasionally at the Open Door Health Center.

The Lincoln Community Center is the site for an ESL program currently being taught in Mankato. In an effort to assist people with LEP to access public transit services within the Greater Mankato Area, a representative from our system will meet with the classes several times per year. The meetings generally involve us using a bus to pick up the ESL class and take them on a tour of some of our routes. The ESL class is taught by several interpreters and they are on board during the training. During the training we:

- Drive the routes.
- Explain how to pay a fare.
- Explain how to request a transfer.
- Explain how to request that the bus stop.
- Answer any other questions that may come up such as where to wait for a bus, how to signal you wish the bus to stop etc.

Factor 2. The frequency with which LEP persons come in contact with our transit programs, activities, or services.

Generally the first time that an LEP person will come into contact with our system is when they board a bus with a translator who is explaining how to use the system. The translator is generally somebody from Lincoln Community Center. This person will review what had been taught in class with regards to paying a fare, requesting a transfer and requesting a stop etc. We have found that many of these tasks can be accomplished by our drivers nonverbally and are quite effective. The main destinations for LEP persons appear to be Lincoln Community Center and Open Door Health Center (which is an income based health care facility located in Mankato).

According to our drivers, the main languages spoken by LEP persons appear to be Hispanic and Somali.

It has been our experience that most of the LEP persons will use public transportation to attend ESL classes and occasionally for trips to Open Door Health Center. However, largely these folks seem to secure automobile transportation in a very short period of time and are rarely encountered on the buses again on a regular basis once they graduate from the ESL program.

Factor 3. The nature and importance of programs, activities, or services provided to the LEP population.

Our transit system considers transit to be an important and essential service for many people living in our service area.

It has been our experience that most of the LEP persons traveling via public transportation are doing so for one of several reasons:

- Educational
- Medical appointments

Factor 4. The resources available to our transit system and the overall cost to provide language assistance.

Our current budget for marketing to or communicating with LEP persons in their language about transit services that are available to them is \$____0_____. This may include funding for staff training, translation services, brochures, flyers, posters, newspaper ads, radio ads, website, etc.

Other resources that may assist an LEP in accessing public transit services may be found at:

- Lincoln Community Center
- Minnesota State University, Mankato International Student Office
- <http://edocs.dhs.state.mn.us/lfserver/Legacy/DHS-4374-ENG>

B. Language Assistance Measures

We will continue to work with the ESL program and offer hands on learning with regards to access to public transit. Additionally, we will work internally to develop an organization-wide policy for assisting LEP persons that are part of our community, whether they want to access transit services, section 8 housing or any other City services.

Language measures currently used and planned to be used by our transit system to address the needs of LEP persons include the following:

- ____ Translating key documents in the following language(s): _____, _____
- ____ Arranging for availability of oral translators.
- ☒ Communicating with LEP persons' groups about transit services.
- ☒ Posting notices in appropriate languages informing LEP persons of available services.
- ____ Other. Describe _____

C. Staff Training

To ensure effective implementation of this plan, the transit system will schedule training at orientations for new staff and for all relevant employees on an annual to review:

- The transit system's Language Assistance Implementation Plan
- Demographic data about local LEP population
- Printed LEP persons' materials
- How to handle verbal requests for transit service in a foreign language
- Responsibility to notify transit manager about any LEP persons' unmet needs

D. Notice to LEP Persons about Available Language Assistance

Our transit system plans to notify LEP persons in their own language about the language assistance available to them without cost by using the following methods:

- ____ Signs on buses or at bus stops
- ____ Brochures
- ☒ Posters
- ____ Sending information to local organizations that work with LEP persons
- ____ Telephone messages
- ____ Local ads (newspaper, radio, TV)
- ☒ Website notices
- ____ Information tables at local events, grocery stores, pharmacies, and churches
- ____ Other, describe _____

E. Monitoring, Evaluating and Updating Plan

The transit system will review this plan during its annual review with its Mn/DOT transit project manager by:

- Assessing its effectiveness (e.g., comparing numbers of LEP persons served by year, number of requests for language assistance received during the year),
- Assessing the sufficiency of staff training and budget for language assistance,
- Reviewing current sources for assistance to ensure continuing availability, and
- Reviewing any complaints from LEP persons or about their needs that were received during the past year.

This plan will be reviewed by our transit system annually. Revisions of this plan will be approved or adopted by the transit system (transit manager or board) and dated accordingly.

F. Dissemination of Plan

This Language Assistance Plan is available on our website at www.ci.mankato.mn.us .

This plan is also available at no cost in English upon request by telephone, fax, and mail or in person.

If requested to be provided in another language and it is feasible to have it translated, it shall be provided at no cost to the requester.

G. Contact Information

Questions or comments about this plan may be submitted to:

Name: Mark Anderson

Title: Superintendent

Address: PO Box 3368, Mankato, MN 56002-3368

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